

Additionally, staff at UNC-GA reviewed a draft of this report; this final report incorporates some of their feedback. UNC-GA also provided a final written response contained in Appendix E.

Legislative History

UNC Directed to Develop Plans for a Tuition Surcharge

S.L. 1993-321, Sec. 89(b), as modified by S.L. 1993-769, Sec. 17.10 (See Appendix A), directed the UNC System to develop a process for charging a 25% tuition surcharge on students who take the following coursework:

- Over 4 years and over 140 credit hours to earn a baccalaureate degree; or
- Over 5 years and over 110% of the necessary credit hours to earn a baccalaureate degree in any program that the Board of Governors had officially designated as a “Five-Year Program.”²

The act stipulated that credit hours earned through the following methods be omitted from calculation:

- The College Board’s Advanced Placement and College-Level Examination Program (CLEP) examinations;
- Institutional advanced placement or course validation;
- Summer-term programs; and
- Extension programs.

The act also required the UNC System to report to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee by April 1, 1994, on its progress in developing a tuition surcharge policy. UNC’s report (See Appendix B), recommended the following:

- The surcharge apply to undergraduates beginning school in Fall 1994 or later;
- The following types of credit hours count toward the surcharge: regular session degree-creditable courses; repeated courses; failed courses; courses dropped after the last official “drop date”; and credit hours that are accepted for transfer in from any other institutions, except summer term credit hours from other UNC institutions;
- The following types of credit hours not count toward the surcharge, in accordance with S.L. 1993-321, Sec. 89(b): the College Board’s Advanced Placement and CLEP examinations; institutional advanced placement or course validation; summer term programs; and extension programs;
- For first baccalaureate degrees, the surcharge be assessed on students in the following programs:
 - A program that requires no more than 128 hours (i.e., a typical four-year program) who take more than 140 hours; and
 - A program that requires more than 128 hours who take more than 110% of the hours required to complete the degree;
- For subsequent baccalaureate degrees, the surcharge be assessed on students who take more than 110% of the hours required to complete the degree.

Tuition Surcharge Policy Implemented and Codified

Beginning with students who enrolled in Fall 1994, UNC implemented the 25% tuition surcharge as described in its April 1, 1994, report. This Board of Governors’ policy (See Appendix C) remained in place until the General Assembly codified the tuition surcharge in 2009, creating G.S. 116-143.7 via S.L. 2009-451, Sec. 9.10. The codified tuition surcharge policy mirrored the Board of Governors’ policy, with the following exceptions:

- The statute created the following criteria under which the surcharge could be waived, if a student demonstrated that his or her education had been disrupted by: (i) a military service obligation, (ii) serious medical debilitation, (iii) a short-term or long-term disability, or (iv) other extraordinary hardship;
- The statute did not address whether students pursuing subsequent baccalaureate degrees should be subject to different credit-hour caps than students pursuing a first baccalaureate degree; and

² In this report, the phrase “Five-year Program” refers specifically to those baccalaureate programs officially designated as such by the UNC Board of Governors, such as the UNCC Bachelor of Architecture.